

Promise Always

by amber2

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1. Default Chapter Title

Thought they go mad they shall be sane
>Though they sink through the sea they shall rise again
Though
lovers be lost love shall not;
>And Death Shall Have No Dominion

>
Promise of Always
>By: Amber

>

>
" Damn you! Damn you! You promised me how can you leave me like
this?"
>
Tears rolled down his face making his eyes seem even bluer. His
normally immaculate braid was disheveled, his clothes were wrinkled
and soiled, what day is this anyway? Mentally he shrugged who cares,
he felt devastated his head lowered to the bed of one of the few
remaining people that meant the world to him. Death was destroying
his world yet again.
>
" Mr. Maxwell, I'm sorry we need you to step outside the room
now."
>
" No! No way, lady I can't leave."
>
The nurse nodded compassionately, " just for a moment honest as
soon as we're done the doctor will want to speak with you." Is there
the nurse paused before delicately probing, any family or friends we
should contact the file was not as complete as we..."
>
" No! He raised a shaking hand, I'm sorry it's just the two of
us any questions you have ask me he shuddered.." All right Mr.
Maxwell, the nurse soothed why don't you step out now and as soon as
we are finished you can return."
>
He stood by the waiting room window watching the gradual
lightening of the sky, dawn it looked like it was going to be a
beautiful day he loathed it. All he saw was a replay of the shuttle
faltering, before flipping end over end. He closed his eyes fists
clenched nothing he did erased that image from his mind it would be
etched there until he died. The last few days had been hell, he

thought as his finger abruptly ran down the blind slats, but then his life had very few moments free of hell or death for that matter.

>
" Just when I was starting to think of the future, he whispered looking at his hands why do I always end up alone?"
>
The door opened and closed quietly, Duo swung around his stomach plummeted when he saw the grim look on the doctor's face. He knew it Death was here, and who better than his disciple to recognize his presence

>
 " Mr. Maxwell ?"

>
Duo nodded, " Doc please just tell me."

>
The doctor pulled off his glasses, " Mr. Maxwell I will not offer you false hope. I think that if you have anyone you want or need to contact the time to do that is now."

>
Duo's breath froze, he felt empty how can you live without your heart's treasure he thought inanely.

>
" Mr. Maxwell? Mr. Maxwell ! ?? Duo, the doctor softly clasped his shoulder, is there anyone we can call to be here with you? "

>
Duo jerkily shook his head, " how long he whispered hoarsely?"

>
Dr Baye nodded with resignation. " It won't be much longer now."

>
 Duo stared at him with eyes glazed in pain, "can I go in now? "

>
Dr. Baye squeezed his shoulder gently, "of course son and I am so terribly sorry."

>
Duo stepped around him pushing open the door, he hesitated glancing back over his shoulder, "hey Doc! He called softly, " thanks for trying."

>
Dr. Baye nodded, watching him go in he stood there a moment longer tapping the Bio unit against his leg. He sighed, he had seen that look all too many times during the war, eyes that had seen too much death and destruction.

>
 " Shit..."

>
Frustrated he slapped the med unit once more against his leg before heading down the hall.

>

>

>

>
I have written very few fan fiction stories and those I have seemingly are enjoyed I finally worked up the nerve to post one I was challenged to write. I hope by the time I finish this one will have touched someone else as well.

>
The above poem was by Dylan Thomas 1936. It's said Mr. Thomas was a firm believer in reincarnation in one form or another.. So somehow this I hope will be appropriate/clear by the time I finish editing the rest of the story.

>

>

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> <p><p>

2. Default Chapter Title

Forgive my spazzin I wasn't trying to review my own story just a multitasking gone wrong talking on ICQ and uploading does not mix...

>
If Yaoi bothers you please stop now, but I assure you its

harmless..

>

>

>Promise Always
By Amber

>

>Duo lifted his forehead from the bed he had been praying it seemed like ages now he must have dosed off. He lifted his head and tried rolling the stiffness from his neck, when he happened to glance over an see eyes the color of the rarest sapphires staring fixedly at him.

>"Heero he choked out, as he lightly laid his hand on his arm."Duo tentatively,pushed Heero's hair back out of his eyes he was frightened to touch him. O god he thought desperately, there is no where I can touch that won't cause him pain.

>Duo inhaled raggedly, before leaning in and briefly brushing his lips across Heero's.

>Duo,he whispered slowly lifting his hand he tugged once on his braid before letting a finger gently trail down the length. Duo tried to smile,god knows I want to show him some happiness he thought. He deserves it hell we all do. However, thought and deed were two different things, the smile quivered and slowly died as fresh tears flowed like a stream.

>"Damn you Heero, you promised."

>His finger caught Duo's tear slowly rubbing it over his lips he put it in his mouth and smiled.

>"I know he winced, trailing off he smoothed out his face and started again. "You will have to live for me, he said softly."

>Heero's head rolled toward the window morning already the sun was sending a pattern of dancing light across the wall. He turned back to Duo reaching up to cup his jaw and neck he pulled him close.

>Duo closed his eyes and swallowed the lump in his throat threatening to choke him as Heero's breath gently whispered across his face and hair. "I want you to do something for me."

>Duo forced his eyes open, nodding anything. "Call her."

>Duo shook his head, as a sob escaped "no don't ask me to leave you now not now."

>Heero's eyes met his full of promise, "I will not leave without saying goodbye."

>Duo lowered his forehead to rest on Heero's,and surrendered to the inevitable.Suddenly his eyes snapped open, blazing into Heero's.

>"Promise me!"

>Heero's mouth quirked, "I thought I just did."

>Duo lifted his head, sliding lower he pressed his cheek to Heero's before he reluctantly pulled away and forced himself out the door.

>

>

>

> <p><p>

3. Default Chapter Title

I hope so far everyone's ok with this I know it seems depressing but hang in there..

>

>Promise Always By Amber

>
Duo stood there in front of the telephone, his mind a complete

blank on what to say. There were allot of reasons he did not want to do this but the main one was Relena herself. O he knew Heero loved him, but he also knew that deep down Heero loved Relena as well. That part of Heero he could never reach, it belonged to her and only Relena could draw out Heero's softness. He was envious of that he shrugged, he could honestly admit it to himself.

>
A part of him was as equally drawn to Relena's warmth as Heero was but he also craved Heero's intense passion. She was one of those rare people that when she cared about someone she accepted a person warts and all. What person in their right mind wouldn't want to bask in the warmth of unconditional love? Duo stood there lost in his musings, he wondered if Heero ever knew that a part of him had selfishly wanted them both. Shaking his head, he returned to the present what did it matter Relena never had eyes for anyone but Heero. Now he was about to rob her of that small part of Heero she had unknowingly had all along.

>
Duo straightened smoothing his hair back; he drew a calming breath before initiating the link. After several unsuccessful tries, he got to the inner sanctum, but not before having to give them his name. He made it through to her private secretary only to discover she was in the middle of a meeting. Listening to the standard don't call us we will call you he interrupted.

>
"Look lady, give me a break already I don't have time to wait this is an emergency."

>
The screen flickered, "one moment please Mr. Maxwell,"

>
"Duo she smiled fondly, you couldn't wait looking at her watch another fifteen minutes."

>
Duo forced a smile; " you know me full speed ahead."

>
Relena nodded humoring him; " umm hmm OK what can I do for you now that you have lured me into playing hooky? " Duo started several times to try to tell her but couldn't find the right words. How could he when understanding all this eluded him as well? How to say hey Heero made it through the war only to die in a shuttle crash. It made no sense but then when did a senseless death ever make sense.

>
"Duo? Her smile wilted, what's wrong?" It's Heero she whispered." She leaned forward Duo what is it?"

>
"Lena there was a shuttle crash, he said bluntly."

>
She stuttered,"but I.. I saw that..I would have seen his name there was no Heero Yuy on there."

>
" Lena, will you come?"

>
Relena nodded,"of course." She hesitated; Duo is Hilde there with you? "

>
He shook his head," Hilde's married now,I heard she's expecting her first child in a few months he smiled ruefully."

>
"And the others? "

>
Duo shook his head,"no time he asked for you."

>
Relena closed her eyes visibly shaken; " Duo hold on I am on my way, together we will make it through this."

>

4. Default Chapter Title

Promise Always

>By Amber

>
Relena closed her eyes visibly shaken;"Duo hold on I am on my way,together we will make it through this."

>
"Just tell me where, she urged."
>
Duo released a breath, he hadn't realized he had been holding.
North Shore ICU."
>
"I'm coming Duo make sure he knows I on my way.I will be there."

>
Duo sat on the edge of the bed softly caressing his arm Heero was unconscious again. He had been drifting in and out since he had returned.Duo gritted his teeth, a tear slid down his face it wouldn't be much longer now."

>
The door pushed in and a nurse stuck her head around the edge; motioning with her hand she let the door shut again. Duo stood looking down at Heero for a second before he bent kissing his lips and quietly moving out the door.

>
"I'm sorry to bother you Duo, there's a woman at the nursing station she gestured. "She wants to visit your friend." Because of the severity of his injuries and the rules on the floor, we needed to verify her status with you."

>
Duo looked in the direction she pointed. Relena stood there anxiously shifting from foot to foot. As soon as their eyes met, she started running down the hall.

>
Duo smiled wryly, "yeah its all right he's been waiting for her."

>
The nurse nodded before continuing on the opposite direction.Relena halted in front of Duo her eyes slid over him marking the changes time had wrought.Duo blushed as he held his arms open.Smiling warmly, she stepped into a hug laying her head against his chest.

>Duo's height had finally materialized, standing at least 6 feet his shoulders had broadened and his slender frame was more muscular.She pulled back grabbing his braid teasingly.

>"Ahh Duo how you have grown."

>She scrutinized his face intensely; maturity had leant a leanness to his face removing all traces of youth.The smile was the same that impish grin egging one to join him in his latest deviltry. The eyes though, the smile didn't quite reach his eyes they were filled with sorrow and pain.Stepping back, she battled to rein in her own emotions. "Tell me."

>Duo sighed, "he has internal injuries they can't stop the bleeding all they can do is give him something for the pain." He's crashed once already but they managed to pull him back." His jaw clenched, "it won't be long now.

>They gazed at each other silently each lost in their own thoughts. Duo blinked suddenly taking in her very un-Relena like appearance. Jeans and a T-shirt, her trademark braids were missing her hair was loose about waist. Suddenly it clicked no guards.

>" Princess where are your bodyguards?"

>Relena's face took on a stubborn look, "I left them behind I was in a hurry."

>"You little idiot."

>Relena defiantly lifted her chin,"don't go there she warned."

>Duo shook his head. "Come on lets go." They stepped up to the door, he was pushing it open when she suddenly grabbed his hand. He flinched; her hands were like ice.

>" Lena?" He covered her hand with his.

>"Duo I'm scared."

>His hand tightened on hers at those words, "yeah me too."

>Relena stepped inside. Her eyes immediately went to the bed; biting her lip, she drew blood O god Heero how did you survive at all.

Moving closer her eyes drifted down taking in the condition of his body, before her gaze slowly returned to his face. There was an innocence there now that was missing while he was normally awake. She stood motionless concentrating all her attention on that moment when he would wake and she could see eyes of cerulean blue once more.

>She hesitated, for a second before giving into temptation, fingers softly sifted through hair like silk. She leaned down and kissed him; rubbing her lips lightly back and forth over his before reluctantly pulling away. Mentally she shook off her reverie and softly called over her shoulder. " Duo."

>He circled around to the other side of the bed. " Yeah?"

>She smiled wistfully,her hand lifted again without thought gently playing with his hair. "Tell me were you both happy?"

>He sucked in his breath sharply;his eyes studied her profile intently. Yes.

>"I'm glad that's all I ever wanted for him was to find happiness and love."She lifted her head, her face softened as she studied Duo's confusion."You had three years together;she trailed off softly before returning her gaze to Heero."

>"How long did?" He groped for words.

>Her mouth quirked at the corner,"I know you and Heero were lovers she finished." He nodded. Then realized she couldn't see him.

However,before he could answer her she spoke up.
A sad little sigh slipped out; "O Duo my innocence doesn't equal ignorance.I did what I always do.Both of you needed to believe I was unaware."I had come to care for all of you pilots,especially you and Heero she lifted eyes luminous with unshed tears."

>
" Oh lena.."

>
"I didn't want to loose all the family I had left she said huskily but I lost him anyway." Her hand shook as she reluctantly withdrew from stroking his hair to wipe the tears from her face.

>
"I didn't want you wasting you life on me Heero said as he weakly clasped her hand in his."

>
Heero she cried her other hand lifted to tenderly brush back his bangs.Duo scooted closer linking his fingers with Heero's.

>
Relena shook her head;"I never considered it a waste I loved you." Did you really think that I didn't know you spent the last three years right under my very nose? "You always seem to know me so well. I counted on you to realize it didn't matter to me."

>
Relena he said in a raspy whisper, "it matters to me I loved you, I wanted what was best for you." "You have to stop looking for me in every face you see, fall in love forget me." She shook her head frantically as tears rained down her face.

>
" Duo he murmured."

>He leaned down to rest his forehead on Heero's.Cupping his face Heero brushed his lips across Duo's wet lashes. His voice failing he whispered "Ai shiteru Duo." Then with Relena openly crying Heero lost his struggle to stay conscious once more.

>Relena and Duo sat through the night in a companionable silence, it seemed like the whole world had ceased to exist beyond the walls of this room. Duo inched his hand across Heero to clasp Relena's tightly, an unbreakable barrier formed not of any metal but of something far stronger the bonds of love.

>When Death claimed Heero Yuy, he left this world as he did everything with a quiet dignity enfolded within the arms of those that loved him the most.

>It was pouring rain but it was still a media circus.A hero, a young one dying the way he did it was big news. The press couldn't ignore the irony, to survive three wars yet die in a commercial flight. The bonus in this tragedy was the fact that the young man had friends that numbered among the some of the more influential individuals of the time making it a media event unlike any other. Add Relena Peacecraft former Queen of the world's noticeable absence and it took on a story of epic proportions.

>It was a moving ceremony, beautiful in its simplicity. After it was all over silence descended over the hillside,except for the constant patter of the rain against the earth. Duo stood there head bowed rain soaking through his clothes and hair.So immersed in his thoughts he was startled when a hand landed on his shoulder. Duo's head snapped up focusing on Zechs.It was then,he noticed everyone had left except Lucrezia and Zechs.

>She stood in the distance with an umbrella patiently waiting.Their eyes met and held brothers in arms not always on the same side but united in the desire for peace.

>Zechs clasped his shoulder," I am so sorry."

>Duo nodded, "Thank you." he said simply.

>"Are you all right? " Zechs asked his level tone-anchoring Duo for a moment.

>Duo got a far off look in his eye,and then he blinked his gaze returned to Zechs.
"Honestly? I don't know." Zechs stared at him with compassion, "if you want to take some time off."

>
Duo shook his head before he could finish,"no that's the last thing I need can't shirk my duties to Miss Relena."

>
Zechs opened his mouth to say something but checked the impulse simply nodding instead. Zechs wiped the water from his face and gestured toward the cars. Want to ride back with us?"

>
Duo smiled sadly, "I got Heero's bike over there but thanks man all the same."

>Zechs nodded and turned to leave. He had taken a few steps when Duo called out." Sir." Zechs turned.

>"Is she ok? I expected her to be here I mean she was so"

>Zechs smiled sadly, "she wanted to but she said her grief was not for the entertainment of strangers." Take care Duo and if you change your mind just let me know." With that, he joined Lucrezia, draping his arm around her shoulder they quietly comforted one another as they walked down the hill.

>It wasn't a long wait. Duo knew she would come.He studied her from the treeline. He shifted the binoculars both ways looking for guards and saw none. Swearing, he swung back to focus on her.She was dressed all in black her hair soaked with raindrops, took on the appearance of a diamond tiara. The wind kicked up by the storms wake gently lifted the ends of her hair causing them to dance wildly in the breeze. She slowly moved along intent on reaching her destination, her arms laden with white roses.

>It wasn't the first time Duo was struck by her resemblance to storybook Princesses of old. He smiled ironically wasn't that why he went to her rescue the first time. He rose from his crouch intent on going to her when he froze,shaking his head he returned to his position. Instead, he watched over her keeping her safe while she dealt with Heero's death in her own way.

>Relena stood there numb, a hazy fog seemed to surround her since that fateful day. She knew it could happen but somewhere along the way, she had gotten use to Heero doing the impossible. She stared down at the freshly turned ground with an intense hatred she didn't want to think about him in the dark. Cold and alone he had spent so

much of his life in darkness in one form or another.

>She knelt laying the flowers on his grave,a keening whimper turned into a hoarse scream as she threw back her head shouting her grief at the heavens.Falling forward her hands sunk into the fresh soil grabbing handfuls she brought it up to her face staring at it as tears welled up in her eyes and spilled over.Spent,she stood on trembling legs; her head bowed she whispered rest in peace my brave soldier.Relena started back to the car when she suddenly turned. Glancing again at his grave she realized this time,she was the one walking away.She lifted her tear streaked face to the sky letting the rain bath away her tears and wondered if it had hurt Heero as much to leave her behind as it was hurting her to leave him.

5. Default Chapter Title

Promise Always:

>By Amber

>
The young woman stood at the window letting her thoughts drift it had been such a long year. There were moments when the pain of loosing Heero didn't hurt quite so much.Then something she would see would suddenly remind her and her heart would ache all over again.She knew the others were worried about her she just couldn't bring herself to reassure them.It would only be a lie she wasn't the same after Heero died it was useless to pretend otherwise. Unfortunately that girl was what everyone seemed to be the most comfortable with.She frowned remembering what day it was.She had wanted to visit his grave today but commitments hadn't allowed her the time and that seemed to be the final straw as far as she was concerned.

>
Therefore,she had impulsively made plans for a long weekend telling only Milliardo. He had argued persuasively about security but she had been adamant. Maybe it was her frantic tone that persuaded him in the end. Nevertheless, she had won. After a quiet drive out to Heero's grave,she then planned to hop a transport on to Monterey. There was a bed and breakfast there overlooking the ocean.It seemed a fitting way to mark the anniversary of his death it had after all first begun at the ocean.She tensely rubbed the bridge between her eyes she needed to get away if only for a little while.Away from prying eyes, she needed that more than anything else right now.

>
A discreet signal from her vidphone drew her attention.Without turning she sighed tiredly, "yes Mrs. Carnes."

>
"I'm sorry to interupt Ms.Peacecraft but Mr. Maxwell is here."Relena's grim demeanor lightened in a slight smile checking the time she shook her head like clockwork she thought.

>
"Send him in." Oi,ojousan. He came striding in filling the office with that boundless energy and enthusiasm.

>
She gave him a glance over her shoulder."Duo let me guess, you just happened to be free and you're starving?" She turned lifting her eyebrow quizzically.

>
Duo shrugged sheepishly, "well now that you mention it."

>
Relena laughed,"Duo I swear I think you ask me to lunch because I'm the only one that can afford to feed you."Duo stared at her with an odd expression on his face.Her laughter was unexpected musical even,it reminded him of windchimes gently stirred by a summer breeze. Noticing his expression, her laughter trailed off becoming self-conscious. She blushed.

>
"Duo?" She stared at him intently;trying to interpret his

expression but it disappeared too quickly. The happy go lucky mask was once more in place. Relena sighed silently just as well she thought. Assuming her own mask of serenity she smiled politely, automatically she chose words, which would put Duo at ease.

>
Relena moved to her desk taking a seat, smiling lightly. "Well as tempting as the offer is I'll have to pass." She looked down pulling out the latest proposal for her to review.

>
"OO you don't know what you're missing I found this new pizza place that has an all you can eat buffet."

>
Her lips twitched, "gee the chance to watch you stuff yourself and make me nauseous in the process or leave early."

>
"Aww come on I'm not that .." Whaaa he said, perching on the corner of the desk. "Your leaving early he grinned no way." She looked up from clearing off her desk, "it can happen."

>
"Yeah and I heard Elvis is really alive and working for the Preventers." Relena stared at him blankly, "what?"

>
Duo sighed, "never mind. "Soooo where are we off to today??" She tilted her head considering him for a moment, then long lashes swept down covering the expression in her eyes. Relena stood picking up the files, opening the door she handed them to the secretary; "here are those figures my brother requested for Monday's meeting."

>
"O miss I could have gotten them once you left."

>
Relena smiled, "that's quite all right it was no trouble." O Mrs. Carnes once you're finished, you can knock off for the rest of the day if you wish."

>
"Helllllloooo if I didn't know better I'd say you were trying to avoid the subject," Duo said in a sing-song tone.

>
She closed the door then took her seat, "So how was your date?" "Huh?" Hey how did you know about that?" She shrugged smiling secretly.

>
Duo grumbled, "women it wasn't a date it was just a movie."

Relena's eyes twinkled merrily, "with a girl nothing wrong with that."

>
"Hey now wait a minute." Relena blinked, distraction that's the key. She noticed the paper she was playing with for the first time shrugging she had nothing to lose why not she stood.

>"Duo maybe you can help me with something." "Huh? O you bet," he nodded. She stood and walked around the desk leaning her hip against it she handed him the paper. His eyes widened in surprise.

>"Duo she said nonchalantly, apparently a hooded figure scared the poor man senseless according to Sally he required hospitalization." Why would someone jump out at Lt. Willams and chase him through the mansion's gardens?"

>Duo hooted, "Willams the weasel, and he calls himself a soldier?" Umm Duo looked up cagily, "I can't imagine." Well he shrugged tossing the paper on her desk, other than he's a wimp."

>"Still it's strange don't you think, she looked at him from the corner of her eye, he kept repeating Shinigami over and over they finally had to sedate him. "Wasn't that what you were called during the wars Duo?"

>He eyed her warily, "it's um fairly common mistake I would think Princess if um you see a hooded figure most people would make a connection to um death." Yeah that's it."

>Relena nodded, she leaned in placing her hands on either side of where he sat. "Your probably right. Duo I do need one more thing if you could? "Their eyes met and held, as she leaned in far enough for him to detect the subtle hint of her perfume. Duo?

>Distracted he said, "Hmm?"

>Relena moved towards his ear and whispered,"Go eat so I can get out of here." Relena straightened and then casually moved back to take her seat.Pulling the files forward,she continued to shuffle the papers into two manageable stacks.Duo shuddered in response to the warmth of her breath in his ear then the realization of what those words meant sunk in.

>"Ouch Wuman is so going to kill me.."He hopped off the desk striding toward the door.Relena kept her eyes lowered as she heard the door open.

>Duo paused, turning his eyes skimmed over her profile. "Lena is this guy someone you are interested in,he trailed off uncertainly?"

>Relena started in surprise, "Lt. Willams?" Duo nodded, "I mean you went with him to that embassy dinner normally the Commander accompanies you."Relena slid the stack of papers back into the folder giving her time to compose her thoughts.

>"Lt.Willams presents one with a most professional demeanor."

>"O Ok...er well I uhh gotta go if you hear screams send in the EMT's ok,"he winked as he closed the door.

>Relena stared blindly at the door;she looked down at the folder clenched between her hands. She took a deep breath,releasing the folder she splayed her fingers wide trying to get her emotions under control.More and more her feelings for Duo collided with those that had been reserved only for Heero.It didn't seem to matter that the man had once had a male lover.And except for the occasional lapse Duo treated her like a sister.He had been around allot more this year,when she was down he seemed to pop up, he knew when she ate and didn't.And when the walls closed in,Duo appeared distracting her enough to tamely accept her yoke once more.

>All she knew was lately there had been one to many dreams that started out with Heero and wound up with him changing into Duo.It had gotten to the point most mornings she could hardly look him in the face without blushing.That's why she need this time alone to figure out how really screwed up she was.She leaned down shakily placing her head in her hands;she was not going to obsess over another man with the preference toward his own gender. Straightening she stood jerkily,grabbing her things she opened her private door,checking both ways she slipped quietly down the hall.

>

>

>If you've made it this far I thank you all those that have stuck with the story all those kind enough to email me your comments I do so appreciate it I was afraid I was going to be killed with this story. And so far I've been proved wrong trust me I appreciate your kindness.

> <p><p>

6. Default Chapter Title

Promise of Always

>By: Amber

>

>Duo came in slamming the door, heading for his desk he plopped down.Sally and Noin smiled conspiratorially at one another. Wufei looked up scowling,

>"Maxwell have you no consideration for others at all? Where is our food? You left an hour ago..."

>Duo straightened,"wait just a minute he muttered how did she know

about that."He leaned forward urgently. "Did the princess see the weasel..I mean Lt. Willams after the Embassy dinner?"

>Sally and Noin looked at each other blankly. "Um not that we are aware of." Duo popped up and started pacing back and forth, "what do you mean not that you're aware of?"

>Lucrezia sighed, "ok Duo there is no indication Relena met with Lt. Willams after the embassy dinner."

>He stopped pacing flinging himself back in his chair he stared off into space muttering. " What does it mean when you ask someone if they like a person and they say that this person has a most professional demeanor."

>Wufei smirked, "what it means is you are a weakling a loser." Duo grinned then stopped jerking forward in his chair "how did Relena learn about Willams hospital visit?"

>Sally rolled her eyes, "Duo the man's screams could be heard a mile away." Duo fell back pouting. "He jumped up O man she tricked me they looked up again."

>They exchanged looks with one another Wufei sighed; "will you cease your infernal babbling."
Duo walked over slapping his hands on Wufei's desk. "Don't you get it?"
>
Wufei studied him impassively,"No. But then I have never understood you.I suspect somewhere in your bloodline there is insanity."
>
"That's cold Wuman I am so not feeling the love here."

>
"Duo maybe we could help you if we understood what you are talking about," Sally said patiently.
>
He stared at them when suddenly an odd light appeared in his eyes turning he strode out the door.Noin got off the corner of Sally's desk and looked at the others. "Does anyone have any idea what that was about?"
>
"I think the unstoppable force has met an unmovable object Sally grinned." Noin blinked.
>
Wufei snorted with irritation, "that was as incomprehensible as that braided baka."
>
Sally glared. "At least he is trying to get on with his life unlike some people I could mention." Sally turned to Noin, "haven't you noticed Duo's increased attentions toward Relena?"
>
" No,not really well not anymore than usual that is." Sally smiled, " it's the brother that has all your attention hmm."

>
Lucrezia blushed, "seriously when did this start?"
>
"Hmm right after Zechs bowed out from the Embassy dinner and Lt. Willams escorted Relena in his stead." They exchanged a look. "He didn't she shook her head.Please tell me he didn't."
>
Sally shrugged, "the assailant was never identified.
Moreover,all Lt. Willams could say was Shinigami had come for him."

>
Wufei snorted without looking up; "of course, it was him this piece of idiocy screams Maxwell all over it."
>
The door slammed open. Startled they swung around. Wufei laid his gun down snarling, " one-day baka someone is going to shoot your worthless hide." Ignoring Wufei, he walked over to Noin " she's gone."

>
"Relena?" Lucrezia guessed. "She shrugged that is not that unusual Duo."
>"Without guards? Duo growled.I thought it was weird at the time her not answering me about leaving early."

>"Maxwell being the expert on weird himself would be the one to easily spot similar behavior in others, Wufei pointed out."

>Lucrezia frowned, walking to Zech's door she knocked hearing the affirmative to enter. Zechs looked up and sighed from their faces he could guess what this was about. "Zechs are you aware Relena has left without her guards again?"

>He studied them a moment, "yes Relena arranged to have a long weekend he said quietly."
"That stupid idiot Duo said." Zechs continued on ignoring him, "I felt it was in our best interest to give her that time."This way at least I know where she is going."Duo's head jerked up staring intently, avoiding his gaze Zechs unobtrusively slid the papers in a folder.

>
Lucrezia protested, "Zechs this is not the first time she is not just anyone, if we loose..."

>
Zechs shook his head almost imperceptibly, stopping her words "we can't cage her or we are going to loose her anyway." Damn this is so messed up." Duo turned slamming out the door.

>
Lucrezia studied him speculatively. "I know you. There is no way you would let her go off unguarded."

>
Zechs met her gaze his lip quirked at one corner. "I gave her my word I would not send anyone after her." Lucrezia searched his face puzzled when suddenly understanding came. " Duo, you think Duo will go after her."

>
Zechs shrugged, "yes." He came around the desk;his arms pulled her close. Zechs rubbed his cheek against the top of her head; "there has always been a part of Duo that was more attentive to Relena than Heero was." He shrugged,"lets just say if he will dress in a costume and scare off her escorts then it is a strong possibility."

>
"You knew about that as well,"she murmured. He laughed softly; listening to the beat of his heart she almost missed the feel of his lips against her hair. Content she murmured,"I hope we are doing the right thing."Zechs rested his chin on the top of her head and closed his eyes. "So do I."

>
Duo's gaze searched the area sliding into the office he melted into the shadows.His eyes darted around the room lifting a visor to his eyes he slowly panned around the room. Satisfied there were no lasers he moved quickly to the desk. Clicking a small pen light on he aimed it across the surface of the desk.Sticking the light in his mouth, he deftly skimmed the tips of his fingers over the surface of the desk.He felt a small indention when it clicked he chuckled." I still got it."

>
A small section of the top lifted up,within it another compartment pulling out a small device he placed it over the code panel and let it cycle through the combination.A small ping signaled the unlocked panel,he wasted no time grabbing the files.He pointed the light at the contents within shuffling through them rapidly he flipped them aside until he found what he was looking for.Duo smirked gotcha,sliding the papers back in the folder,then the folder back into the compartments.He scanned the area making sure everything was the way he found it then he silently left the way he came.

>

>One floor up Lucrezia looked at Zechs with admiration."You called that one right." Zechs swung around in the chair and stood. He clicked off the video equipment. "You know he's good I was sure it would take longer for him to find those compartments,he said thoughtfully." Standing he leaned forward and gave her a quick kiss." Let's go." Lucrezia linked her fingers with his, "shall we tell her he's on his way?" He shook his head after a moment, " no its time she stood still and faced whatever is going on between them."

>The flames writhed hungrily around the logs, with the silence broken

only by the occasional hiss and pop as the kiss of the fire devoured them from within and out. There was something hypnotic about the flames a dozen different reds swirling and shifting to their own rhythm. Relena lifted her glass taking a sip of the wine it slid down sweet and smooth coupled with the fire it created a sense of well being. She smiled but it held no humor she should go to bed she was just a little tipsy. No scratch that allot tipsy maybe she should have eaten something first.

>She lifted the glass watching the light from the fire shimmer and shift within the wine as she rotated the glass back and forth. Relena tilted the glass draining it, she pushed herself to her feet and made her way to the bar opening the small fridge she topped off the glass once more. Relena bent to place it back when she changed her mind smirking she made her way back to the chair by the fire. Bending over she placed the bottle on the floor, shifting in the chair she leaned her head back she needed to think unfortunately she hadn't been doing that.

>Her visit to Heero's grave left her melancholy closing her eyes against the pain she realized something standing there the pain wasn't so unbearable anymore. That knowledge alone opened the wound leaving her feeling raw and exposed. Duo her eyes opened she couldn't think about one without the other. He filled a need in her different that Heero but equally important he made her feel alive. She had too much death in her life, too much waiting for a more opportune time that never came. Heero went on with his life even before his death as far as he was concerned she was a closed chapter.

>She smiled sadly, in her stubbornness she clung to the belief that as long as he was alive there was hope that one day he would return her love the way she wanted, needed him to. She drained her glass and refilled it no as much as the knowledge hurt with Heero's death all the illusions she clung to ended. She had to go on what hurt was that going on with someone else wasn't as painful anymore. She felt like the butterfly that counts not the months but moments, so has time enough to live. Heero had the courage to die could she dishonor his memory with anything less than the courage to live.

>Sipping her wine she considered her last moments with Heero live those had been his wishes for her. He had faced death thinking of everyone but himself. He told her once she was stronger than she knew, a single tear trickled down pooling at the corner of her mouth. No she whispered poignantly, "I'm not Heero." Draining the glass she grabbed the bottle to refill it only to discovering she had finished it. Live she whispered sadly, "I finally understand what you tried to tell me Heero." Relena got up placing another log on the fire, she watched the flames greedily embrace the log a moment longer before heading to the fridge for another bottle of wine. She smiled wryly as she opened the bottle refilling her glass she lifted it in a silent toast to Firsts.

>

>
Fireflies, Rabindranath Tagore 1928 "The butterfly counts not months but moments, and has time enough."

>

7. Default Chapter Title

Warning: Some swear words and suggestive foreplay but nothing too explicit.

>

>Promise of Always
By: Amber

>

>
Duo frowned as he studied the building the security was lousy, the only thing that could make the situation worse was having to wander the hotel looking for her. He grinned slyly thanks to the Commander that wasn't necessary. He knew deep inside something was about to change the question was he ready for it? More importantly is Relena he asked soundlessly as he stared intently at the darkened room above.

>
She felt the cooler air swirl around the hem of her robe and a part of her knew it was almost as if she had been waiting for him. Relena felt a flutter of excitement deep in her stomach; it spread through her body like quicksilver. Her head fell back against the cushion of the chair as her gaze focused on the fire, and waited an enigmatic smile ghosted across her face. It's started she thought. "Come in Duo."

>
He felt lightheaded with relief there she was safe not broken and bleeding nor dead. She was alive and healthy and so very beautiful the light from the fireplace made her look like a figure carved in ancient gold. The mindless panic riding him hard since this afternoon slowly dissolved leaving him with a host of conflicting feelings chiefly among them anger. His eyes narrowed it was time to no more running no more hiding, with that Duo stepped forward.

>
His breathing quickened he moved into the room on silent feet, "I should beat you. Do you have any idea how worried I was once I realized the half-assed stunt you were pulling?"

>She glanced at him from the corner of her eye, "was it any crazier than the stunts you've pulled Shinigami?"

>"That is different, he gritted."

>She tilted her glass finishing it off before languidly reaching down to pour another." It usually is." He came around and stood in front of her, forcing her to look at him. His eyes narrowed. "You're drinking."

>Relena smiled wryly, "very good Duo I can see nothing escapes you."

>"Damn you he swore, haven't I lost enough people I care about without you sending the crazies an engraved invitation."

>She ignored him. Standing she went to brush past him, when his hand shot out grabbing her arm off balance brushed against him. Relena inhaled sharply as her breast tightened in response to his closeness.

>"If you are trying to pull a Heero he said tautly forget it I'm not going to let you."

>Relena met his look calmly jerking she tried to pull away. "I'm not trying to get myself killed Duo she said softly." She looked pointedly at his hand. "Want something to drink?" He glared, "this isn't over."

>She sighed, "I didn't think it was." He let go as she glided over to the bar; grabbing a glass she handed it to him and then passed him the bottle before sinking into the chair.

>He held up the bottle. "What is this stuff anyway?" She smiled despite her nervousness, "most people call it wine. I like it." "I bet he glared."

>Relena sighed, "why are you here?" Duo slammed the bottle on the table. "I can't believe you asked me that."

>Relena sipped her wine; "peace is not that fragile that it hinges on one person alone."

>"Don't preach at me Lena you're not in a cabinet meeting now. Duo stared at her intently, what is this really about?"

>"O Duo she whispered why did you have to follow me?" He hesitated something about the way she was acting broke his heart. He sat the

glass down and went to her. He hesitated, as though uncertain of his welcome crouching his hand reached out to cup her face. "Talk to me please I thought we could tell each other anything."

>She looked so lost, tilting her face into his hand her eyes fluttered closed. "I'm ok Duo then suddenly she pulled back. She tilted her glass finishing it before holding it out to him she raised her eyebrow. "Haven't you had enough he said quietly."

>She stared at him impassively for a moment before stretching for the bottle and poured herself some more. "Can't you let him go? Relena paused then sat the bottle back on the table. "I have let him go."

>Duo clasped her jaw turning her face to meet his eyes. "Have you?"

>Her breath froze as his hand slid down, softly stroking her throat "yes she said huskily, I've said my good-byes."

>His eyes slowly drifted downward the peach colored silk gave her skin golden glow, her skin felt so incredibly soft. His fingers glided down the vee of her robe, and up again before moving back to repeat the process on her skin. His eyes followed his fingers sliding down her chest until it reached the edge of her robe. Relena inhaled shaky breath, it sounded unnaturally loud in the stillness of the room. His eyes lifted to hers before dropping to fasten on her breasts as they tightened lifting toward his hand. She grabbed his hand stilling his movements. "Have you let go of the past Duo?"

>His eyes lifted, "ahh Lena." He turned his hand within hers lifting it; he softly brushed his lips across her knuckles. "With the life I've led I learned that lesson long ago. I loved Heero but loving him doesn't mean I can't love again." "I've been waiting for you to realize that."

>"Duo she whispered." Cupping his face she leaned closer trying to read him, usually she could his emotions were refreshingly open and honest. She stared into his eyes and gasped. There was a hunger there, nervously she licked her lips as butterfly like sensations started in her stomach. Her eyes widened fascinated as his gaze was suddenly focused on her mouth, and without thought he tightened his hold upon her, drawing her in closer.

>Almost hypnotically he leaned in toward her, his intent plain he was just inches away when her eyelids fluttered closed. His mouth gently nibbled the edge of her lips, before brushing softly across her mouth. His teeth caught her bottom lip playfully. Relena gasped as Duo settled more firmly over her mouth, gently coaxing a deeper access with his tongue. He stroked and caressed hers in a slow sweet seduction as his hand gently sifted through silky hair. A mewling sigh escaped Relena, as her hands rose to tangle in the silky softness of his hair, arching closer she tried to assuage the fiery ache building through out her body.

>Duo pulled back his tone demanding, there was an urgent intensity there. "Lena?" "Lena..." His thumbs gently brushed across her cheeks. She blinked hazily, at him her breath coming in little pants. "If you sure about this then one more day won't matter he pointed out."

>"Duo she said huskily leaning forward her eyes languid with desire..."

>"OO no." Duo groaned standing he pulled her up. She looked at him confused; blushing she tried to pull away. "It's alright Duo I understand put it down to Relena makes a fool out of herself once more."

>Duo frowned his hands grabbed her hair fisting in it he forced her to look at him.
"When we make love I don't want there to be any

doubts." He jerked her forward the muscles along his length trembled and flexed, his whole body responding to the intimate touch of her own. Duo stared at her intensely; "I want you,I care about you more importantly I love you."

>"It's not like I can hide my body's reaction to yours. I don't know what's going on in that crazy head of yours but forget it." You're tired, you've been drinking your first time deserves better circumstances than that."

>Relena cleared her throat, "how do you know it's my first time?"

>Duo smiled softly releasing her hair to gently comb his fingers through it,"If you didn't have deep feelings about someone Relena you would never consider it." You're an all or nothing girl."

>She pulled back her eyes entreating him, "and you are you an all or nothing guy? " Duo lifted his hand taking a strand of her hair he brought it to his lips and rubbed it softly back and forth before tucking it back behind her shoulder.

>He smiled wryly, "where your concerned yes I am." Duo clasped her hand tugging her into the bedroom. "Come on Princess let's get you tucked in I have a feeling tomorrow your going to regret drinking all that wine."

>"Duo she said hesitantly tugging at him, to stop will you stay?" His thumbbed lightly stroked her lip back and forth, "I'll stay he said hoarsely, before pulling back to guide her into the bedroom.

>

>The sun broke through clouds beaming down benevolently on a beautiful day. The breeze off the ocean carried the smell of salt and seaweed, while the gulls screamed their joy at riding the air currents back and forth above the waves. The sound of a child's laughter lifted in joy carried to the hill above completing the perfection of the afternoon. Relena stood on the hill a contented smile on her face as she watched the scene below. Suddenly as if sensing another the two figures playing in the water stopped and looked up,lifting her arm to shade her eyes she smiled and waved.

> "Duo, Hiro lunch time." A small boy with a waist length braid, and hair the color of tawny gold came running up the dune.

>"Mom! Mom, look what I found," eyes of cerulean blue met hers in excitement. She knelt down holding out her arms as he launched himself into her arms. Standing she swung him around causing them both to laugh with delight.

>"Show me, she smiled." Hiro held up a shell and placed it over her ear.

>"Listen mom and you can hear the ocean." Tilting her head she pretended to listen,glancing at him through her lashes. "I hear growling, she teased."

>"Mom he giggled." She sat him down. "Go I'll be right there." She watched him run off as arms gently came around her pulling her back into a hug. His hands softly caressed the slight swell of her stomach.

>"You need to be more careful picking him up like that especially now."

>Relena laughed softly leaning against his chest she sighed content. Duo rested his chin on her head. "Why the heavy sigh?"

>She rested her hands lightly over his. "I'm happy."

>Duo turned her studying her intently. " Promise?" Relena smiled softly,a look of innocent trust and calm certainty upon her face.

>" Promise."

>

>

>

>This concludes Promise Always I want to thank all those that kindly encouraged me, offered constructive suggestions. And those that were nice enough to compliment me on the story I thank you. I hope in some small way it entertained you. Some will probably gag at the obviously fluffy ending frankly this was the one concession I made for me I wanted a fluffy ending. For Sage I hope you enjoyed your Duo story you dont know how hard this was.

End

file.